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ABSTRACT

This book examines how social and economic changes in the past 20 years have affected the lives of Western youth and changed their attitudes toward and experiences of work, education, relationships, and health. Part 1 reviews 10 years of research, policy, and practice related to individuals aged 15-30 in the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, and Canada. Part 2 questions the validity of approaches to educational research and policy that measure youth life patterns with reference to past norms. The need to develop new research and policy frameworks that are more in tune with the changed conditions of life for Western youth is emphasized, as is the need to draw together international and local research findings. The following are among the specific topics discussed: (1) the difficulties of balancing options and establishing oneself in adult life; (2) the problems of youth outside the mainstream; (3) the shortcomings of policies formulated with reference to the supposed "mainstream"; (4) coping with change; (5) student hopes and outcomes; (6) the gender factor; (7) the problems of at-risk youth and policy solutions; and (8) changing life patterns and careers and the need to rethink careers. (Thirty-six tables/figures are included. The bibliography contains 250 references.) (MN)

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